

# CIVICS

## Chapter 3: What is Government?



## What is Government?

### Government and its Functions

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Government is a group of people who govern a country or a state and manage its affairs. Every country needs a government to make decisions and administer its affairs. Following are the functions of a government:

- All the administrative functions such as building railways, postal services, roads, public schools and hospitals are performed by the government.
- The government of a nation protects its boundaries and maintains peaceful relations with other countries.
- The government works for the upliftment of the poor section of the society. It formulates various programmes to help the poor.
- It also ensures that every section of society has food to eat and basic health care facilities.
- During natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods, the government organises various relief programmes for the people of the affected regions.
- Those people who violate any laws are punished by the courts, which are also part of the government. It thus maintains law and order in the state.
- Various decisions such as protecting the interests of the country on an international level or controlling the resources are taken by the government on behalf of the people.
- The government has the power of making and implementing laws. If any person feels that laws are not being followed by an individual or a group, he/she can approach the court and file a case.



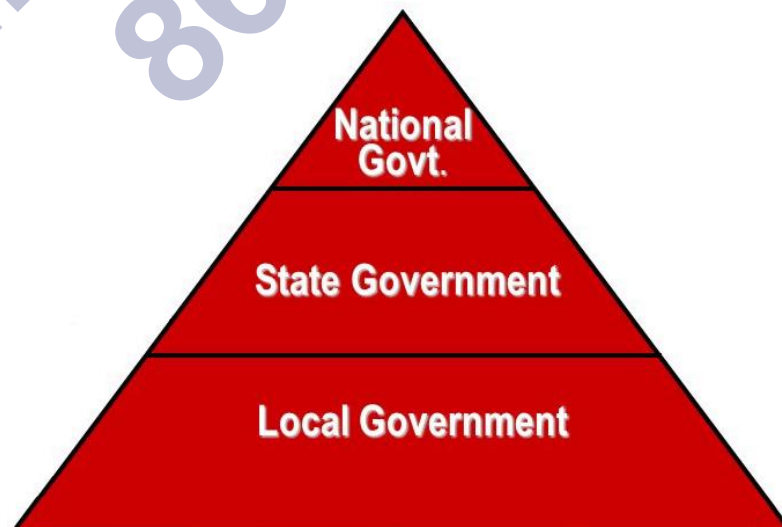
In case of natural calamity, relief works are organised by the government.



Government appoint army personnel for protecting the borders of the country.

### Levels of the Government

The government functions at various levels. They are:



Levels of Government

- **National Level:** The Central Government manages the administration of the entire country and protects its boundaries.



- **State level:** Various State Governments look after the administration of their own state.



- **Local level:** Village panchayats and municipal bodies look after various affairs like education, health, cleanliness etc in their own villages or districts.



### How Does Government Make Sure That Its Rules Are Followed?

- So, government generally formulates rules to manage the economy, build roads, stop people from encroaching on the properties of others. But why do people listen to governments?
- People listen to governments because the government's legislative arm creates laws so that there remains an order and peace in society. For example, as your book says, every person who wants to drive a motor vehicle has to first obtain driver's licence. Without driver's licence, it is illegal to drive a vehicle and it is punishable. This rule is also enforced with the help of laws concerning motor vehicles.
- There are certain laws that prevent others from entering the property of others without permission. The citizens, themselves can use such laws to protect themselves.

### Types of Government

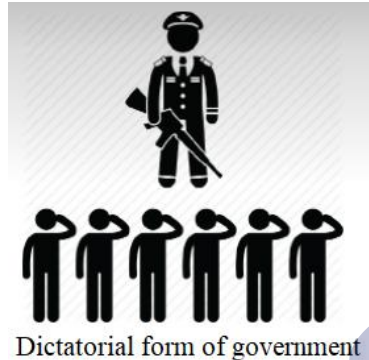
Following are the various types of governments:

- **Monarchial form of government:** In a monarchy, the ruler takes all the decisions. There is a small council of ministers to advise him on certain policies, but he has the final say in all matters of the state. His position is hereditary, and he does not have to explain or defend his actions.



In a monarchial form of government,  
the ruler has all the powers in his hands.

- **Dictatorial form of government:** In a dictatorial form of government, a person or a group of people assume power without the consent of the people. Basic fundamental rights are denied to the people in a dictatorship.



- **Democratic form of government:** In a democratic form of government, the ultimate power lies in the hands of the people as they vote for candidates during elections. Only those candidates who win become a part of the government. The government has to take full responsibility for the actions which are taken by it.

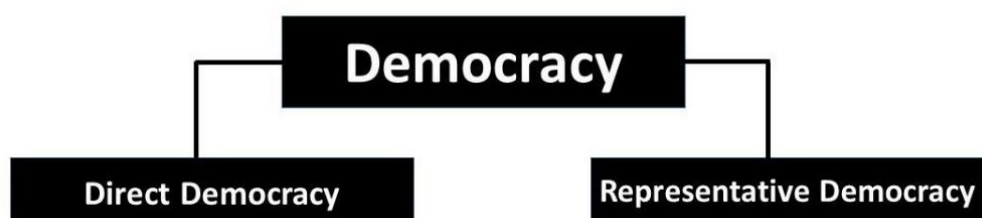


In a democracy, people choose their own representatives.

## Types of Democracy

People in various parts of the world have fought to gain democracy. India became a democratic country after long period of struggle. Similarly many other countries in the world have struggled to establish themselves as democracies. At the same time, in many countries, people are still striving to establish a democratic rule.

## Types of Democracy



The basic feature of democracy is that people elect their own leaders. It is through them, that they participate in various matters of the state. Today almost all countries are **representative democracies**. In a representative democracy, people do not directly participate in law making affairs. They choose their representatives who collectively make laws for the country.

In a democracy, there is universal adult franchise. It means that every person above a certain age has the right to vote.



In a democracy, every adult citizen has the right to vote.

In many countries, people had to fight for achieving the principle of universal adult franchise. Earlier, women, slaves and poor people did not have the right to vote. Only a few powerful, rich and aristocratic sections of society voted and made laws for the country.

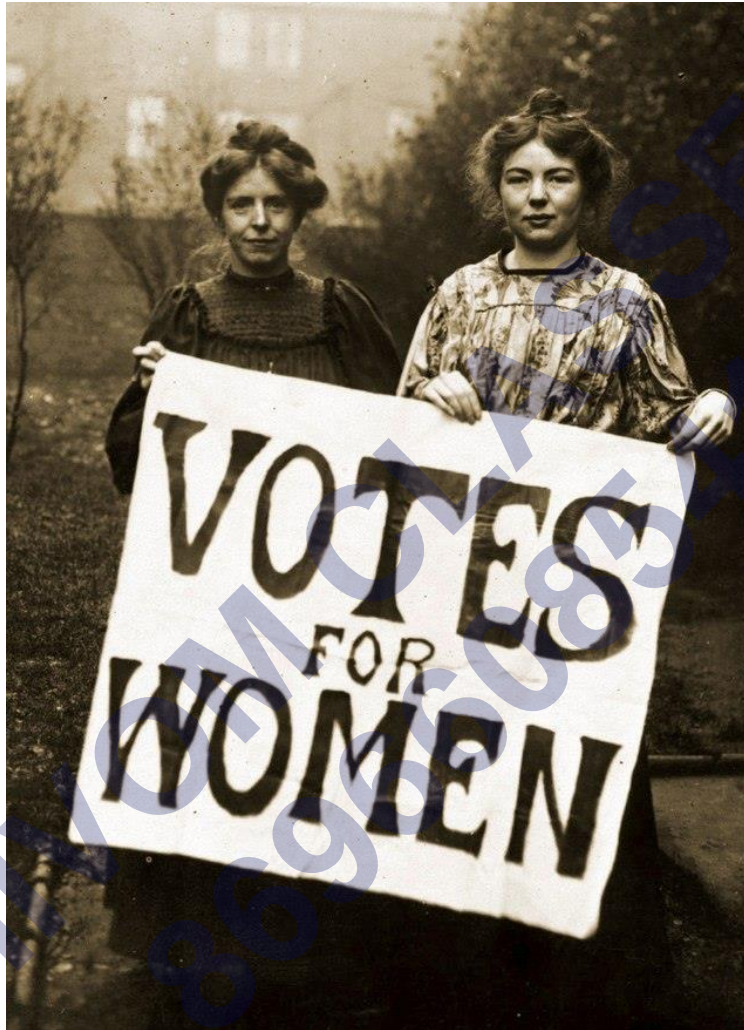
In India, Gandhi along with other nationalist leaders advocated the principle of universal adult franchise and stressed that every Indian should have the right to vote.

### **Struggle of Women to Gain the Right to Vote**

- In many countries till the first quarter of the twentieth century, women did not have the right to vote.
- In due time, women across the world organised themselves and demanded the right to vote.
- During the First World War, when men went away to battlefield to fight wars,

women were called upon to do the work which was earlier done by men.

- The women who organised themselves and demanded the right to vote came to be known as suffragettes as they demanded the right to vote for all women.
- Many suffragettes were imprisoned and many organised hunger strikes. Finally, women in US and UK got the right to vote in 1920 and 1928 respectively.



**Women demand the right to vote in the early years of the twentieth century.**

### **India Is a Democracy**

India is also a democracy. The people of India take part in the election where they choose people who would then represent them in the assembly. This kind of democracy is known as representative democracy because here, instead of directly participating in the governance, the people choose their representatives who would do that work.

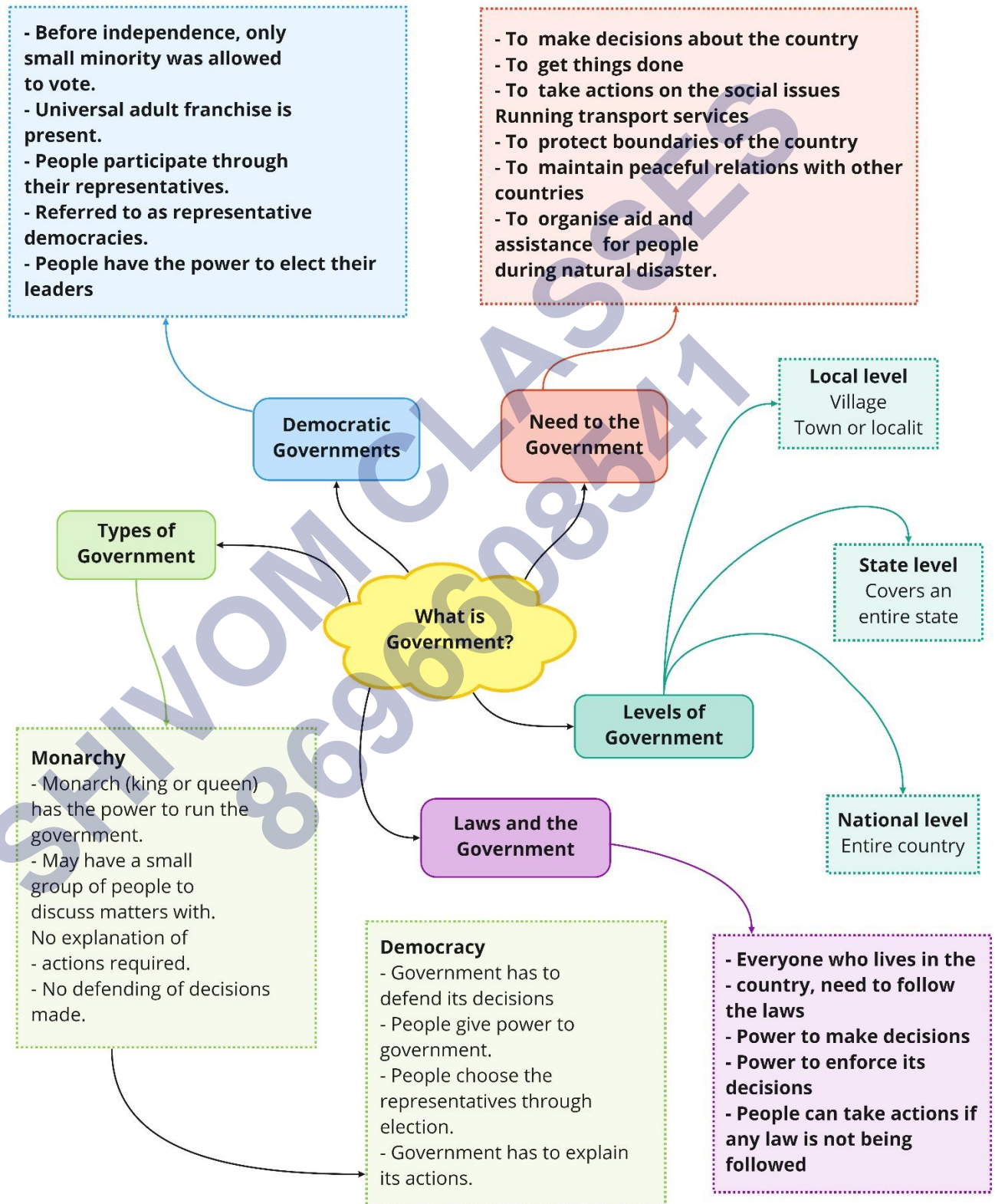


But India was not democracy from beginning. Before the British came, India was ruled by Kings and dynasties. When the British came, India became the subject of British rule. It is the sacrifice of the freedom fighters that has helped India gain democracy. In India any adult - be it, man or woman - has the right to vote. This is known as the Universal Adult Franchise - a major criterion for any country to call itself democratic.



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Class : 6th Social Studies (Political Science)  
Chapter - 3 : What is Government?



## Important Questions

### ➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. The highest court of judgment is:

- (a) Supreme Court
- (b) High Courts
- (c) Both (a) and (b)

Question 2. Who demanded that all adults whether they being rich or poor, educated or illiterate have the right to vote?

- (a) Dr BR Ambedkar
- (b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- (c) Mahatma Gandhi

Question 3. The local level relates to the:

- (a) Village, town or locality
- (b) State
- (c) Country

Question 4. Who makes the laws for the whole country?

- (a) State Government
- (b) Central Government
- (c) Local Government

Question 5. When did American women get the right to vote?

- (a) 1940
- (b) 1920
- (c) 1931

Question 6. A mark is put on the finger to make sure that a person casts only\_\_\_\_\_

- (a) Three vote
- (b) One vote
- (c) No vote
- (d) Two vote

Question 7. What does the Government make for everyone to follow

- (a) Law

- (b) Rules
- (c) Decisions
- (d) Relations

Question 8. Which of the following is not the way people express their views and government understand what actions they should take

- (a) Rallies
- (b) No vote
- (c) Strikes
- (d) Dharnas

Question 9. Democracy is a form of government chosen by the

- (a) Minister
- (b) People
- (c) King
- (d) President

Question 10. On which level does Indian government take decision to maintain peaceful relations with U.S.S.R

- (a) Micro
- (b) Central
- (c) State
- (d) Local

Question 11. Zimbabwe attain independence from whom?

- (a) From White majority rule
- (b) From White minority rule
- (c) From Americans
- (d) From British rule

Question 12. American women got the right to vote in\_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) 1919
- (b) 1920
- (c) 1921
- (d) 1922

Question 13. At which level does the government work?

- (a) Internal and External
- (b) Micro and Macro
- (c) Small and Big
- (d) Local, state and national

Question 14. The citizens of the country have the right to approach the \_\_\_\_\_ if they feel there is violation of any law by an individual or by the government

- (a) Lawyer
- (b) Parliament
- (c) Hospital
- (d) Court

Question 15. Krishna Raja Sagara Dam in

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Odisha
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Kerala

➤ **Fill in the blanks :**

1. The government works at different levels: at the \_\_\_\_\_ level, at the level of the \_\_\_\_\_ and at the \_\_\_\_\_ level.
2. American women got the right to vote in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In India, before Independence, only a small \_\_\_\_\_ was allowed to vote.
4. The suffragettes demanded the right to vote for all \_\_\_\_\_.

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F) :**

1. In Monarchy, kings and queens do not have to explain their actions or defend the decisions they take.
2. Women in the UK got to vote on the same terms as men some years later, in 1938.
3. Courts are also part of the government.
4. In their earliest forms governments allowed only women who owned property and were educated, to vote.

### ➤ Very Short Questions :

1. How many level of government are there in our country?
2. What was Gandhiji's demand?
3. What happens if someone commits a crime?
4. What is universal adult franchise?
5. Write some examples of institutions that are part of the government.
6. What are the different levels of government?
7. What was the unfair practice according to Gandhiji?
8. According to Gandhiji's Young India, who should be given the right to vote?
9. Which type of government would you prefer to have in the place you live in? Why?
10. Why government needs to control resources and protect the territory of a country?

### ➤ Short Questions :

1. When a person can approach the court?
2. What do you mean by representative democracy?
3. Why do you think the government needs to make rules for everyone in the form of laws?
4. Do you think it is important for people to be involved in decisions that affect them? Give two reasons for your answer.
5. "There was a time when governments did not allow women and the poor to participate in elections". Comment.

### ➤ Long Questions :

1. What are the functions of government?
2. What do you understand by the word 'government'? List five ways in which you think the government affects your daily life.
3. Write a short note on district administration.
4. Gandhiji strongly believed that every adult in India should be given the right to vote. However, a few people don't share his views. They feel that illiterate people, who are mainly poor, should not be given the right to vote. What do you think? Do you think this would be a form of discrimination? Give five points to support your view and share these with the class.

5. Differentiate between democracy and monarchy forms of government.

**ANSWER KEY –**

➤ **Multiple Choice Answer :**

1. (a) Supreme Court
2. (c) Mahatma Gandhi
3. (a) Village, town or locality
4. (b) Central Government
5. (b) 1920
6. (b) One vote
7. (a) Law
8. (a) Rallies
9. (b) People
10. (b) Central
11. (b) From White minority rule
12. (b) 1920
13. (d) Local, state and national
14. (d) Court
15. (c) Karnataka

➤ **Fill in the blanks :**

1. local, state and national
2. 1920
3. minority
4. women

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F) :**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. False

➤ **Very Short Answer :**

1. The government works at three different levels.
2. Gandhiji demanded that all adults should have the right to vote.
3. If there is a dispute or if someone has committed a crime we find people in a court.
4. Universal adult franchise means that all adults in the country are allowed to vote.
5. Some examples of institutions that are part of the government: The Supreme Court, The Indian Railways and Bharat Petroleum.
6. The government works at different levels: at the local level, at the level of the state and at the national level.
7. In India, before Independence, only a small minority was allowed to vote. This was the unfair practice according to Gandhiji.
8. According to Gandhiji's Young India, all adults should be given the right to vote.
9. We would prefer to have a democratic government because it is a government by the people, for the people and of the people.
10. Government needs to control resources and protect the territory of a country so that people can feel secure.

➤ **Short Answer :**

11. If a person feels that a particular law is not being followed, for example, that they were not hired for a job because of their religion or caste, he or she may approach the court and claim that the law is not being followed.
12. In representative democracy people do not participate directly but, instead, choose their representatives through an election process. These representatives meet and make decisions for the entire population.
13. The government needs to make rules for everyone in the form of laws to maintain peace and order in the society. With help of laws government establishes equality and justice in the society.
14. Yes, it is important for people to be involved in decisions that affect them because people understand their issues in better way and can suggest better solutions to solve those issues.
15. In their earliest forms governments allowed only men who owned property and were educated, to vote. This meant that women, the poor, the property-less and the uneducated were not allowed to vote. The country was governed by the rules and regulations that these few men made.



## Long Answer :

### 1. Functions of government:

- It takes decisions about where to build roads and schools, or how to reduce the price of onions when they get too expensive or ways to increase the supply of electricity.
- It also takes action on many social issues.
- It runs postal and railway services.
- It protects the boundaries of the country and maintains peaceful relations with other countries.
- It ensures that all its citizens have enough to eat and have good health facilities.
- It provides aid and assistance for the affected people in case of natural disasters like the tsunami or an earthquake.

### 2. The word government refers to a governing body that makes decisions and gets things done for the welfare of its citizens.

#### Five ways in which the government affects our daily life:

- It takes decisions such as where to build roads and schools, how to reduce the price of onions when they get too expensive etc.
- It takes action on many social issues.
- It runs postal and railway services.
- It is responsible for ensuring that all its citizens have enough to eat and have good health facilities.
- In case of are natural disasters like the tsunami or an earthquake, government organises aid and assistance for the affected people.

### 3. District administration:

- States are divided into number of districts.
- Each district in India varies in size and population. At present, there are more than 500 districts in India.
- Districts are further sub-divided into Tehsils or Taluqs.
- Each district is looked after by a collector, the district collector is the important official who is heads the district revenue department and coordinates with the other departments like agriculture, irrigation, forestry, public work and public health.

4. Denying poor and illiterate people from voting do not sound good. Yes, this is a form of discrimination.

**All adult should have right to vote because:**

- People should not be discriminated on the basis of illiteracy and poverty.
- Illiterate and poor people are also the citizens of the country and hence should not be debarred from voting.
- All citizens are equal in the eyes of constitution.

5. **Difference between democracy and monarchy forms of government:**

Democracy	Monarchy
In a democracy it is the people who give the government this power. They do this through elections in which they vote for particular persons and elect them.	The monarch (king or queen) has the power to make decisions and run the government. The monarch may have a small group of people to discuss matters with, but the final decision-making power remains with the monarch.
In a democracy the government has to explain its actions and defend its decisions to the people.	In monarchy kings and queens do not have to explain their actions or defend the decisions they take.
It is elected by the people.	The crown is passed from one generation to another.
People are considered equal.	People are not considered equal.